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ABSTRACT

Strategies that may be used by schools to prevent teacher burnout suggested in this paper are: (1) increasing staff input in decision making; (2) improving the work environment; (3) increasing the flexibility of the school structure; (4) providing opportunities for individual time-out; (5) increasing the sense of individual work significance; and (6) providing opportunities for teachers to achieve satisfaction by reaching self-determined professional goals. Coping strategies for individuals include: (1) cognitive restructuring; (2) effective time management; (3) relaxation training; (4) visualization; (5) quieting reflex; (6) autogenics; and (7) biofeedback. Establishing low-stress organizational techniques as well as incorporating individual stress management techniques can prevent burnout, promote personal growth, and allow professional growth. (JD)

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Prevention of Teacher Burnout: The Challenge of the Future

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Prevention of Teacher Burnout:

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The future of education lies not in the shifting vogues of programs, teaching methods, or curricula, but in the adaptability and competence of teachers. As humanists debate criterion-referenced tests and parents demand a return to basics, teachers struggle to deliver quality education. The teachers have the additional burden of developing professionally and personally. The stress thus placed on teachers can be debilitating, crippling not only the teacher, but ultimately the system. The challenge for the future in education is to help teachers grow both professionally and personally, so they may cope with stress positively and avoid the downward spiral of burnout.

New teaching tools and methods may be beneficial, but education cannot change without effecting changes within the staff. Harris (1980) noted that the total dependency of education on people requires preservice and inservice education to help the person grow. Further, if teachers are dedicated, insightful, inspired workers, education can work even with the poorest organization and supplies (Rubin, 1978). Educators must recognize the people-oriented nature of education and provide personal growth programs as well as professional growth programs. Furey (1978), while recognizing the need for both personal and professional growth, contended that personal growth must come

first since it will teach individuals to be adaptable. Only self-aware people who are willing to change can continue to grow.

The term burnout is recognized instantly today and everyone can point to colleagues who suffer from it. Yet the concept of burnout is poorly understood and little effort is made to prevent its occurrence or alleviate its symptoms. Burnout destroys people, the very resource most vital to education, yet educators rarely address it as a problem for the staff as a whole. Burnout is seen as an individual problem, not as a group concern. Educators are at particular risk because they are in a helping profession. Burnout affects workers in the helping professions in alarming numbers, perhaps due to the stress involved in the interpersonal relationships essential to their work (Maslach, 1982). Education, a people-oriented profession, is a perfect medium for burnout to flourish unless preventive and corrective steps are taken.

Burnout prevents growth, hinders change, and lacks direction; it is the antithesis of the goals of education. Surely burnout, so costly in terms of staff and productivity, must be addressed by educators with an aggressive program of elimination. A two-pronged approach is recommended: first, organizational changes at the school level can reduce the stress level of the work environment; and second, a thorough preservice and inservice program incorporating information on what burnout is, how to avoid it, and strategies to cope with its effects can help individuals.

Definitions of Burnout

Although there are many different scientific and popular definitions and formulations of burnout, almost all incorporate the notion that burnout is a response to stress encountered on the job. Persons in occupations which are people-oriented tend to be more susceptible to the syndrome than persons in other occupations.

Potter (1980) stated that burnout is neither a physical ailment nor a neurosis, although the condition has both physical and psychological attributes. A person suffering from burnout loses the will and ability to mobilize interests and capabilities. Freudenberger and Richelson (1980) described a person with the syndrome as one who has depleted the physical and mental resources of the body while striving to reach some unrealistic expectation. Another source (Pines, Aronson, and Kafry, 1981) gave three components of burnout: physical exhaustion characterized by low energy, chronic fatigue, weakness, and weariness; emotional exhaustion involving feelings of depression, helplessness, hopelessness, and entrapment; and mental exhaustion depicted by the development of negative attitudes toward self, work, and life. To the list of descriptors suggested by others, Maslach (1982) added depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments.

Some theorists (Edelwich & Brodsky, 1980; Farber, 1983; Tubesing, Sippel, & Tubesing, 1981) view burnout as a slow, eroding process. It seldom begins with major symptoms. Normally, the initial signals are minor ones which, if not

attended to, grow into symptoms of major proportion that can not be ignored. Once people start down the pathway of disillusionment, once they have tasted the staleness of continuing frustration, burnout tends to perpetuate itself through its own momentum, leading individuals to cynical attitudes, emotional exhaustion, apathy, and loss of vitality and spiritual zest. Thus, burnout can be conceptualized as a function of the stresses engendered by individual, occupational, and societal factors. The final stage in a progression of unsuccessful attempts to cope with a variety of negative stress conditions is burnout. The progression goes from enthusiasm to stagnation to frustration and finally to apathy, as a result of work conditions (Edelwich & Brodsky, 1980). In order to alleviate and possibly eliminate burnout, there must be direct intervention aimed at interrupting the self-perpetuating cycle.

Ianni and Reuss-Ianni (1983) described burnout as a distinct entity which is characterized by several key features. First, it is a malady with specific contemporary roots in Western society. This notion does not preclude the possibility that it has always existed and has only recently been recognized and labeled, but rather suggests that it seems related somehow to modern living. Second, it is peculiarly related to the workplace. When it is discovered and recognized, its first symptoms are almost always negative responses to the job and work dissatisfaction. Burnout seems to occur in those situations where the stresses of the job or work role become internalized, leading either to somatization of symptoms or loss of self-esteem, or both.

There is consensus that the symptoms of burnout include

attitudinal, emotional, and physical components. The subtle pattern of symptoms, behaviors, and attitudes is unique for each person because people react to stressors individualistically. However, burnout appears to result in reduced efficiency, psychosomatic diseases, loss of energy, loss of interest, loss of confidence, cynicism, rigid adherence to rules, extreme detachment from other persons, and sometimes a singular incident of unusual (for that individual) conduct. Burnout occurs on a continuum. A person may pass through several warning stages before reaching the final stage of burnout. Because of the progressive nature of the syndrome, individuals, companies, and institutions would benefit from early recognition. Early recognition enables the employer and employee to make changes to prevent development into the final stages.

Measures of Burnout

The first step in identifying and coping with burnout is to determine who has burnout (or is approaching burnout). Two instruments, the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Matthews Burnout Scales, place individuals along the burnout continuum. Both are valid and reliable instruments, but they have somewhat different purposes and interpretations.

Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) for use with people employed in human services. The inventory is a 22-item measure with three subscales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. For each statement, the respondent answers "how

often" and "how strong" on seven and eight point Likert scales, respectively. This process results in two scores indicating frequency and intensity for each of the subscales.

Matthews (1984) developed the Matthews Burnout Scales (MBS), actually two instruments, for use in a wide range of workplaces. The two 50-item instruments are designed to measure burnout in employees; one instrument is for completion by the employee and the other for completion by a supervisor. The scales place individuals along a 100-point scale where high scores indicate high burnout.

Both the MBI and the MBS are useful measures of burnout, differing mainly in the information they produce and their appropriate target populations. The MBI presents more information in terms of subscales and the two modes of reporting, frequency and intensity. The MBS, on the other hand, is appropriate for use with a wider audience and has the only scale which supervisors may use to determine employee burnout.

Coping Strategies for Schools

The organization can contribute to burnout in the employees (Lauderdale, 1982). Burnout occurs when the expectations of the school are too high, unclear, or changing frequently. There is also a high rate of burnout when the school fails to provide an environment in which employees can achieve expectations.

The discussion which follows examines strategies for schools to prevent burnout. The suggestions are a partial listing of techniques which could be implemented.

Staff Input in Decision-Making

When management styles allow the staff to set goals and strategies to accomplish the goals, expectations are usually realistic. Having input allows the staff an opportunity to internalize the goals of the organization and to make personal goals which help achieve the goals. In addition to the refinement of goals, employees feel that they have some control over their destiny when they are included in the decision-making process. Lack of control correlates highly with burnout (Fielding & Gall, 1982).

Work Environment

Environmental pressures such as noise, uncomfortable work settings, pollution, and extreme temperatures are highly correlated with burnout (Pines et al., 1981). Comfortable physical environments that are pleasant and designed to meet tastes, needs, and preferences of workers produce far less burnout than unpleasant environments.

Work conditions also include the degree of bureaucratic interference, such as the extent to which the administration interferes with the goal achievement of individual workers, and the number of administrative annoyances, such as paper work, red tape, and communication problems. Both bureaucratic interference and administrative annoyances are highly correlated with burnout (Pines et al., 1981). Schools can attempt to reduce environmental pressures and make the physical work environment as pleasant as possible. Schools can also combat burnout by simplifying such bureaucratic hurdles as complex forms, tangled

communication channels, and unnecessarily complicated work procedures.

School Flexibility

School structures can be made flexible enough to accommodate the individual rather than the individual accommodating the school. To gain this flexibility attention must be given to the individual differences among workers. Some workers like frequent change and innovation while others prefer stability, some workers like complex tasks while others prefer more simple tasks, and some workers like more contact with other people while others choose detailed paperwork. In order to accomodate differences in a school district, teachers can be encouraged to change teaching assignments, if they wish, within the school and between schools. Extracurricular activity assignments can be varied from year to year. A new technique, the career ladder approach in the teaching profession, may be employed to retard burnout by providing opportunities for teachers to advance without having to become administrators.

Another way for the organization to be flexible is to make some of the rules and regulations less rigid. For instance, mental health days - those days of required change and privacy to prevent accumulation of emotional strains - could be classified as sick days. A day away from the work place often revitalizes a person.

Flexitime is appropriate for some job assignments. There are those teachers who prefer teaching in adult education programs because of the night schedule. For staff members who

are morning people, their heaviest teaching load should be scheduled for early morning, and for the afternoon persons, their heaviest teaching load should be toward lunch and afternoon.

With creativity, the school can vary the demands to accommodate individual differences. The saving in human potential would be worth the extra effort and without extra cost.

Time-Out Periods

Opportunities for individuals to withdraw from a stressful situation are important when they are under mental strain; these opportunities are of critical importance with emotional strain. The concept of "time-out" is relevant for any work that involves high degrees of emotional, mental, or physical stress. Staff lounges and other rooms for solitude are assets when persons need to withdraw from the job.

In addition to providing opportunities for individual time-out, the school can plan time-out periods in the normal work day for all workers. An illustration of time-out periods is a school that has two ten-minute periods, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, in which everyone in the school practices relaxation exercises. Another organization planned fifteen-minute periods of calisthenics in the morning and afternoon. Both methods are attempts to reduce staff burnout.

Work Significance

Employees tend to burn out when they feel their role in the organization has little significance (Lauderdale,1982). In the past several decades, society has downgraded careers in education so much that persons in the area question their self-worth. Low

morale coupled with the inability to observe the finished product make teachers and other school staff vulnerable to burnout.

It is particularly important for the school to provide employees with some sense of completion. One way to provide a sense of completion is to set clear, achievable school objectives and to review periodically individual and school success in achieving these objectives.

Feedback is another tool for increasing the sense of significance at work. Feedback and constructive criticism provided by principals and other supervisors should be specific and directly related to attainable improvements. Such feedback enables individual workers to improve their performance and enhances their feelings of meaning and success.

The rewards provided by the school can increase the sense of significance of the worker. Rewards include pay, extrinsic advantages such as benefits, security, and promotional opportunities, and intrinsic advantages such as appreciation and recognition by others. Programs such as the teacher-of-the-month give recognition to teaching staff. Lack of rewards is correlated highly with burnout (Pines et al., 1981).

Schools must recognize the needs for completion, rewards, appreciation, and meaning. When these needs are satisfied, they serve as powerful buffers against burnout.

Training

Formal education for a career can include training designed to minimize burnout (Pines et al., 1981). For staff members with higher education the original reason for choosing their work is

often a search for "self-fulfillment." Such achievers begin their careers with very high expectations of themselves and their work and within a short time they burn out. Advanced education tends to create these high expectations in students, emphasizing the need for self-expression and authenticity. It also emphasizes the value of the experimental, the new, and the exciting. These great expectations are frustrated when professionals find themselves to be small parts of a bureaucratic machine or in an uneventful career. In training programs for teacher education careers, it is crucial to prepare students for the stresses that they will encounter in their work and to provide them with a more realistic and balanced view of the job demands. Students should be able to recognize danger signs of impending burnout in themselves and in people around them and know how to take care of themselves when under stress. It is also important to include training on how to work in a bureaucracy.

Continuing education on the job can also be helpful. Well planned staff retreats, conferences, and workshops reduce burnout. Opportunities for out-of-the-district staff development such as travel and school visitation can also be helpful. Such education provides workers with an opportunity to get away from their work, examine their work pressures, clarify their goals, and consider available but unused coping strategies.

Staff training can give workers the opportunity to develop skills directly related to their work. Therefore, effective training programs and supportive supervision are two methods the

school can supply for skills acquisition and improvement.

Coping Strategies for Individuals

Although organizational change may assist in alleviating or preventing burnout, the person is powerless, in most cases, to change radically the structure of an institution or school. Since burnout afflicts people, the ultimate responsibility for preventing the syndrome lies within the person. The authors recommend strategies for preservice and inservice education that are designed to improve the functioning of the individual.

Burnout is a whole person problem. Solutions to the problem can be found in every dimension of life. It is well known that diet, exercise, and rest affect the way a person feels. The social support network is important also. Although there are many strategies to cure or prevent burnout, the discussion which follows presents three basic methods: cognitive restructuring; time management; and various forms of relaxation training such as visualization, quieting reflex, autogenics, and biofeedback. Cognitive restructuring is a method to change the mind of the person in order to have a healthy attitude and to view the situation from a totally different perspective. Time management encourages the art of spending time effectively by eradicating time-wasters in the day. Relaxation training shows the mind/body connection and teaches a person to elicit the relaxation response at will. Cognitive restructuring, time management, and relaxation training coupled with proper nutrition, rest, exercise, and a good support system are ingredients for a fulfilling and productive life.

Cognitive Restructuring

Cognitive restructuring involves (1) examining the interactions between events and beliefs which lead to perceptions and emotional reactions, (2) recognizing when the reactions are unwarranted or negative, and (3) altering the way one thinks about the situation in order to alter the emotional reaction.

At the core of this approach is the Ellisonian A-B-C-D-E Model presented in Howard S. Young's A Rational Counseling Primer. A refers to activiating events or experiences; B refers to beliefs, ideas, or thoughts about A; C is the consequence (emotional reaction) that stems not from A but from B about A; D refers to the necessity to dispute, debate, question, or challenge irrational beliefs (B); and E refers to the effects of disputing or debating or questioning or challenging irrational beliefs.

McKay, Davis, and Fanning (1981) summarized 15 styles of distorted thinking. Briefly, the 15 styles are:

1. Filtering: Magnifying negative details and filtering out positive aspects.
2. Polarized Thinking: Viewing all situations as black or white, good or bad.
3. Overgeneralization: Making general conclusions based on small details or incidents.
4. Mind Reading: Attributing thoughts and feelings to other people without evidence.
5. Catastrophizing: Imagining the most disastrous results any situation might cause.

6. Personalization: Considering the actions of otners to be always in response to you.
7. Control Fallacies: Considering yourself either wholly responsible or a total victim of fate.
8. Fallacy of Fairness: Considering your opinion as totally fair and right and failing to understand those who disagree with you.
9. Blaming: Feeling you must place the blame for any event, either on yourself or others.
10. Shoulds: Having a list of inflexible rules of how you and others should act.
11. Emotional Reasoning: Believing all feelings are true.
12. Fallacy of Change: Believing that you can change others to suit you if you try hard enough.
13. Global Labeling: Generalizing one or two qualities to form an overall opinion or judgement.
14. Being Right: Viewing all differences of opinion as hostile challenges and your own opinion as necessarily correct.
15. Heaven's Reward Fallacy: Expecting some eventual reward for all your efforts and being disappionted when the reward fails to materialize.

Each distortion is characterized by a faulty way of thinking which results in negative emotional interpretations of events. In order to restructure these styles of thinking a person must: (1) realize that there are negative emotional reactions which are unwarranted, (2) examine his or her thought patterns to see how

they may be distorted, and (3) see new ways of thinking about the circumstances which will lead to positive emotions.

Time Management

Because there are so many tasks to do every day, time is a precious commodity. Teachers and administrators have overwhelming schedules, a condition which makes time a stressor to control.

Time can be thought of as an endless series of decisions, small and large, that gradually change the shape of life. Since no one has more than 24 hours a day, the worker must pay attention to how well he or she regulates the flow of activity in the personal environment. According to Davis, McKay, and Eshelman (1980), inappropriate decisions not only produce frustrations, lowered self-esteem, and stress, but result in symptoms of poor time management. The symptoms of poor time management can be summarized as (1) uncontrolled rushing, (2) chronic vacillation between unpleasant alternatives, (3) fatigue or listlessness with many slack hours of non-productive activity, (4) constantly missed deadlines, (5) insufficient time for rest or personal relationships, and (6) the sense of being overwhelmed by demands and details. Lack of effective time management eventually produces burnout.

Time management is a five-step process (George, 1983). The five steps include time analysis, goal setting, prioritization, delegation, and action.

Time analysis involves exploring how the professional spends time in the present. For approximately two weeks the person

should record what he or she does every one-half hour. At the end of the period, the person analyzes and categorizes the inventory to see how time is actually spent. Categories at work might include socializing, routine tasks, low priority work, productive work, meetings, conferences, and telephone calls. Categories away from the work site may include television, conversation, hobbies, reading, sports, civic activities, travel, shopping, household chores, childcare, personal hygiene and grooming, sexual activities, daydreaming, cooking, eating, and sleeping.

The second step in time management is goal setting. The inventory of activities allows self-evaluation and helps with goal setting. With a time period in mind, perhaps one year, the person makes both long and short range goals. A good way to approach goal setting is to allow the brain to think of all the things the subject would like to accomplish and record the accomplishments on paper. Through brainstorming, an individual has a list of possible goals. For goals to be appropriate, they should meet the criteria of being both measurable and realistic.

Since time is limited and meeting all goals is unrealistic, the logical next step is prioritization. In order to prioritize, the professional should rank the goals in three columns: essential (must do); desire but not essential (should do); and good but can be delayed (can do). The first set of goals becomes the set that a person strives to achieve. The second and third list of goals lie dormant unless the first list is completed.

One way of making more personal time is to delegate responsibility, thus making delegating the fourth step in the

time management model. Teachers and administrators have other individuals such as students, aides, secretaries, and volunteers to assist with the work of the program. The same technique works at home with household chores because all family members share in the operation of the home. For people in supervision, a good rule to follow is "to avoid doing things that someone else can do."

The fifth and final step in time management is action. Action means planning strategy to accomplish the goals and performing the tasks outlined in the strategy. Since most people work better with small segments, the strategy should be broken down into small achievable steps. A person must find some time each day to work on the goals that are important. Even rewarding oneself after small segments of achievement helps the subject stick to the targeted goal. The goal of time management is effective utilization of time for personal benefit.

Suggested ways (Davis, McKay, & Eshelman, 1980) to increase the time a person has for productive activity are such actions as (1) saying "no" to people and matters that do not fit goal priorities, (2) minimizing interruptions and distractions while working, (3) estimating reasonable time for activities and leaving some time for unplanned activities which occur, (4) avoiding indiscriminate television viewing, (5) getting up one-half hour earlier in the morning, (6) using wait time wisely such as reading or planning a lesson, and (7) cutting off non-productive activities. These suggestions are only a few from a long list that may prove helpful to personnel in teaching and

related fields.

Relaxation Training

Various techniques in relaxation training are designed to enable the individual to elicit the relaxation response. The relaxation response is the opposite of the alarm state in the general adaptation syndrome (Selye, 1950). The relaxation response is characterized by decreased heart rate, decreased muscle tension, lowered respiration rate, decreased metabolism, increased digestion, changes in the blood chemistry, and vasoconstriction causing blood flow away from the periphery of the body and toward the trunk. When stress causes an alarm reaction, eliciting the relaxation response can counter the physical changes of alarm and maintain a calm, relaxed state.

Following are brief descriptions of some relaxation techniques known to be successful at helping some people elicit the relaxation response:

Progressive relaxation. This technique is based on muscle tension. The individual focuses on a single muscle, muscle group, or area of the body and alternately tenses and relaxes the muscles (Jacobson, 1976). This process continues by progressing from one area of the body to another, usually moving from the extremities to the trunk. As each area of the body is tensed and relaxed, the individual learns the feelings associated with muscle tension and releases any tensions currently in the body. By the end of the relaxation training session, the entire body should be relaxed.

While progressive relaxation directly reduces muscle

tension, it has other effects less immediately evident. The flexing of muscles causes increased blood flow and thus increases the blood flow to the various parts of the body including the extremities.

Progressive relaxation is one of the simplest relaxation techniques, but is somewhat limited in variety. It is sometimes used as an introductory technique before moving on to other techniques.

Visualization. Bry (1978) defined visualizaton as "movies of the mind" whereby a person is not analyzing or thinking about an experience but actually feeling the experience directly. These movies are derived from the right-brain experience which is intuitive and creative, rather than from the left side of the brain which is logical and verbal. Bry describes the movie or inner experience as similar to the image of a "lovely golden child," beautiful, knowing, loving, and spontaneous.

There are many facets of visualization. It is a source of information about the inner self and a channel to both personal and universal truth. While it is in touch with the imaginary powers, it is also a method of developing control of the autonomic functions and inner awareness of the body.

The first important step in developing a visualization technique is to set the right mood, that is, adopt a positive mental attitude. An undisturbed area where the subject can relax is essential for the inner eye (or "movie screen") to focus and to allow the expectation of a fantasy experience to unfold.

The positive mental attitude approach allows a person to believe that he or she can govern all experiences. What the

individual envisions in life is what is achieved, the images becoming self-fulfilling prophecies.

According to Bry, two methods of visualization to use are receptiveness (starting with a certain theme) and programming (setting up a positive picture to create the pictured situation or what it may represent symbolically). In a receptive state a person may let go and go with the flow of the movie screen, letting the picture roll along on its own. In a programmed state the subject should introduce specific images, discovering first what is wanted by forming precise and clear pictures and holding onto those images. If this particular stage feels comfortable (ask does it feel good and right?), then the person can follow through and use the power of the mind to create personal reality through the movie screen.

Once the theme of the movie is set, the director (the person) should become aware of the feelings the movie evoked. Negative feelings as well as positive should be allowed to form, concentrating on discovering why these feelings are evident. Opening the other senses while experiencing the movies will make the experience more nearly complete and powerful.

The final step, and the most difficult, is to believe and trust in the visualization, giving the result a chance to manifest itself and to use both elements of visualization, active (concentration) and receptive (allowing the idea to work).

In the private screening room of a person, the visualization technique can be used as a tool to improve many areas of life. For optimum good health and in overcoming certain diseases,

illnesses, and pain, the power of the mind over the body (acting as one inseparable system) can achieve excellent results. The setting of the movie should be located in a relaxing, beautiful place, and once comfortable, the person should seek out another person or an animal for a message regarding the illness or pain. After satisfactory communication, good feelings should be realized, both in mind and body.

In the opinion of Bry, the most beneficial experience a person can have is to learn and practice daily an exercise in visualization. Visualization unleashes the creative imagination and allows the replaying of childhood and past experiences. The technique helps a person deal with problems of the present and future. Additionally, the technique helps develop good interpersonal skills.

Quieting reflex. As an alternative to taking drugs for stress-related problems, Charles Stroebel (1982) developed a six-second "quieting reflex" (QR) technique which proved highly successful for persons with demanding schedules. The new procedure solves the problem of low compliance and training associated with other self-regulation techniques (i.e., transendental meditation, relaxation response, and biofeedback).

The fight-or-flight (or emergency) response (Selye, 1950) is prevented from being activated by this simple six-second technique, and thus prevents or reverses illnesses as a result of activating the emergency response inappropriately. QR differs from emergency response in two distinct and highly significant ways: 1) while highly compatible with the high pressure society of today, it permits a person to function with an alert mind

while in a calm body; and 2) after the initial learning period, QR becomes automatic--the QR is activated at a subconscious level in lieu of the body undergoing the emergency response.

The cue for QR is an awareness of something frightening and annoying in the environment (tension, annoyance, anxiety, alteration in breathing) followed by the precise counterpart to the first six seconds of the emergency response--activation of quieting reflex. The following steps should then be followed:

1) Smile inwardly with both eyes and mouth; use a self-suggestion of "Alert amused mind, calm body."
2) Take an easy deep breath; then
3) While exhaling, let the jaw, tongue, and shoulders go limp; the person should then feel a wave of heaviness and warmth flowing through the body from the head to the toes.
4) Then resume normal activity.

These steps performed at the very moment of the alarm stage of stress will enable a person to take control of the impact of stress on the health and help the person to avoid the dangers of stress-related illnesses for the remainder of life.

Autogenics. Autogenics (Everly & Girdano, 1980), a word meaning self-generating, is a high-level cognitive technique for triggering the physiological relaxation response. The technique combines other relaxation strategies such as imagery, deep breathing, and self-talk or self-messages. The technique of autogenics simply helps condition relaxation through recall of relaxed body states and memories of relaxed times in life. It is

a technique during which a person talks to the body and tells the body to relax. It helps if a person can vividly imagine a scene or feeling in which the body has achieved a quiet physical state.

One of the common techniques used in autogenic programs capitalizes on the ability of the body to follow the commands of the conscious centers of the brain. Typical phrases used during the exercises are: I am relaxed; I am calm; I am quiet; My right arm is heavy; My right arm is heavy and warm; My left arm is heavy and warm; and I am quiet and at peace. If a person can imagine warmth, or a feeling level response of a heavy sensation in the limbs, the body has the tendency to reproduce that state. Blood flow in response to the conscious demand will increase to the desired areas thereby creating the desired warmth. This change is physiologically impossible without a change in nervous system tone. Thus relaxation is facilitated.

Biofeedback. Biofeedback is the use of instrumentation for training individuals in the self-regulation of psychophysiology. Scientists have discovered that there is a significant amount of voluntary control over so-called involuntary responses (Brown, 1977). Biofeedback promotes self-exploration, self-awareness, and self-control.

The simple principle of biofeedback is that awareness of body functions is the first and most important ingredient in changing the behavior that causes the stress reaction (Girdano & Everly, 1979). If a person learns to listen to the body, the body tells about its functioning. Biofeedback magnifies the subtle signals so the signs become more noticeable. The readings

of the signals can be used to make a person aware of body language. Peripheral measurements of skin temperature can indicate blood flow changes to a particular region of the body. Galvanic skin response monitors measure the amount of moisture on the skin. Devices which detect muscle action can detect contraction of the skeletal muscles which produce pain and discomfort. Monitoring brain waves can tell the person much about states of consciousness and information processing which can aid in the voluntary control of consciousness. The possibilities of biofeedback are as numerous as the systems that can be measured.

Conclusions

Education, as with health care and similar fields, is heavily people-oriented. As such, it must respond to the needs of its employees as an essential first step. Stress, eventually resulting in burnout if not controlled, may be the single greatest threat to people-oriented industries. Burnout destroys drive, enthusiasm, growth, efficiency, and results in illness, absenteeism, and the loss of once valuable employees.

Fortunately, burnout can be identified and stress reduced before its symptoms are irreversible. Creative organization and management of schools can provide reduced stress environments. Also, a variety of techniques, including cognitive restructuring, time management, and the host of relaxation techniques accompanied by biofeedback, produce the opposite effects of the stress reaction. Practicing these techniques on a regular basis

can relieve stress before its long-term effects are realized.

The challenge for the future is to promote healthy growth both professionally and personally in individual employees and the staff as a whole. Establishing low-stress organizational techniques as well as incorporating stress management techniques in preservice and inservice programs can prevent burnout, promote personal growth, and allow professional growth.

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